

Francis M. Bushnell, Jr.
4924 Cobbs Drive, Apt. 6B
Waco, Texas 76710

02-277

May 10, 2003

Confirmed

JUN 18 2003

Distribution Center

The Honorable Kevin J. Martin
Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

SUNSHINE PERIOD

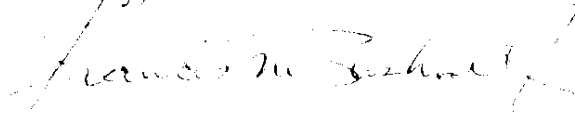
Dear Mr. Martin

OPPOSITION TO RELAXING BROADCAST OWNERSHIP RULES

Current broadcast ownership rules protect an element of American society that is so essential to our freedom: the communication of diverse ideas. Please do not relax the existing rules. Currently, the broadcast media already has too much strength in controlling information. Over the years, they have shown their proclivity for keeping opposing viewpoints off the air. I attach an opinion piece from the October 5, 1989, Wall Street Journal that reflects that intentional control even years ago.

Any further relaxation would add monopolistic strength to that idea control. You have the ability to prevent it. I ask you to please do so.

Sincerely,



Francis M. Bushnell, Jr.

Attachment

As long as the Soviet economy was completely controlled at the center, the absence of a real money merely caused a gradual decline in efficiency of your economy relative to the Western market economies. Now that you have decided to move toward growth and competitiveness with the West, opening up market opportunities

in advising the U.S.S.R.?

For one thing, I believe gold and other commodity-price signals have become much more important to U.S. policy making in recent years, as we have experienced inflation pains under a floating exchange-rate system. Gold, after all, remains the most monetary of all commodi-

expect the Soviet Union could step to the front of the line in seeking credit at the lowest possible interest rate. I would bet such bonds would be snapped up around 3%, which would be the lowest governmental interest rate on earth, including Japan's. As markets gain experience with Soviet gold-backed bonds, interest on the

questions of implementing market-oriented reforms leading to the role of prices in allocating resources will have to be revised. I advise that you view that monetary stabilization is likely to be a major error on the

WSJ 10/5/89

Journalists and Others for Saving the Planet

By DAVID BROOKS

At a recent environmental conference, Charles Alexander declared, "As the science editor at Time I would freely admit that on this issue we have crossed the boundary from news reporting to advocacy." After a round of applause from the gathered journalists and scientists, NBC correspondent Andrea Mitchell told the audience that "clearly the networks have made that decision now, where you'd have to call it advocacy."

At that point Washington Post editor Benjamin Bradlee chimed in, saying "I don't think there's any danger in doing what you suggest. There's a minor danger in saying it because as soon as you say, 'To hell with the news. I'm no longer interested in news, I'm interested in causes,' you've got a whole kooky constituency to respond to, which you can waste a lot of time on."

Mr. Bradlee is right. Probably a lot of "kooks" believe in objective journalism. But why shouldn't reporters lose their self-discipline when discussing the environment? Practically everybody else has.

Somehow the idea has gotten around that the environment isn't a normal political issue, but a quasi-religious crusade. As a result, public discussion of the environment has been about as rigorous as one expects from a jihad.

The shortcomings of advocacy were very much in evidence at the recent environmental conference, sponsored by the Smithsonian Institution. Held in the original museum buildings that celebrate the achievements of the Industrial Revolution, the meeting addressed the topic, "The Global Environment: Are We Overreacting?" Every other time I have been to a

conference organized around a question, there have been speakers on both sides. But not this time. Through the entire conference, not a single disagreement deflected the steady breeze of alarmism.

Perpetual apocalypses such as Lester Brown and Paul Ehrlich rattled off their anthems of doom (just as Rolling Stones rock through the tunes they originated 20 years ago). Speakers and panels moved briskly on and off the podium: an acid rain crisis, a toxics crisis, a famine crisis, a population crisis. The result was a smorgasbord of apocalypse.

On the subject of global warming, a frisky environmental policy analyst named Stephen H. Schneider presented the gloom and doom side of the global-warming debate. A number of scientists are more skeptical about global warming, such as Hugh W. Ellisasser of the Livermore National Laboratory, Reid Bryson of the University of Wisconsin, Richard Lindzen of MIT, V. Ramathan of the University of Chicago and Andrew Solow of the Woods Hole Institute of Oceanography. But they were not to be heard from.

The same sort of stage-managing prevailed among journalist speakers. Barbara Pyle, who is the head of Turner Broadcasting's International Documentary Unit, and who lists herself in her bio as an "internationally recognized environmental activist," appeared on a panel. Many reporters do not see the rules of objective journalism as obstacles to social progress. But they were not to be heard from.

The conference was co-chaired by the CEOs of ABC, NBC, CBS, Turner Broadcasting, Time Warner and the Los Angeles Times, the director of the New York Times and senior officers of other media institu-

tions (Dow Jones wasn't involved). Apparently none of these journalistic companies insisted upon diversity of opinion.

Several of the alarmist presentations were persuasive. For example, Susan Solomon of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration spoke intelligently on ozone depletion. Edward O. Wilson was compelling on "Biological Diversity: The Extinction Crisis." But enlightenment was beside the point. The scientists were limited to 10 minutes, enough time to recite a few familiar facts and sum up with a grandiloquent plea for action (if you can't stand purple prose, don't go to an environmental conference).

Thomas Lovejoy, a tropical biologist who organized this conference, delivered a summary in which he eloquently encouraged the idea that we are in a planetary crisis. "The planet is about to break out with fever, and indeed it may have already," he said, "and we are the disease." Mr. Lovejoy's views are so chic he is puffed in the current issue of GQ.

What to do? George Woodwell, director of Woods Hole Research Center, argued that the world must phase out the use of fossil fuels. Ruth Patrick of the Academy of Natural Sciences said that mankind must do nothing less than "rethink our way of life." Mr. Lovejoy suggested that "we should be at war with ourselves and with our life styles." The anti-growth contingent also made its presence felt. Mr. Ehrlich declared, "We've already had too much economic growth in the United States. . . . Economic growth in rich countries like ours is the disease, not the cure."

These sorts of prescriptions made me think I should have done something violent

to the limos that were idling outside the conference dinner Friday night. Other than that, the conference offered no constructive prescriptions. Not too many politicians are going to go before their constituents and renounce economic growth.

A number of the people in attendance have in the past advocated politically realistic environmental proposals. But none of them rose to challenge the radicals, not even Sens. Timothy Wirth (D., Colo.) and John Heinz (R., Pa.), who sat as guardian lions at either end of the panels.

Here and elsewhere in the environmental debate, a form of Gresham's Law prevails. Apocalyptic predictions crowd out skeptical appraisals. Rabble-rousing eloquence crowds out measured discussion. Politically absurd cries for a Reformation of Human Society intermingle with politically realistic ideas.

The reporters who become advocates seem to think they are doing the environment a favor, but it is hard to see how. Because there has been so little critical scrutiny, the politically mainstream environmentalists don't feel compelled to separate themselves from the Greens who think human progress should have stopped in the 18th century.

Nobody seems to feel compelled to set some priorities, and declare that X environmental problem needs to be addressed before Y. Much of the political right feels spooked about environmental issues because it perceives all environmentalism to be corrupted by socialist command and controllers.

Just when it seems someone is about to get somewhere with intelligent environmentalism, 10 other people mount podiums and declare humanity a disease on the face of the earth.

Mr. Brooks is a Journal editorial writer.

Hollywood, You Slay Me

By ROBERT H. KNIGHT

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And perhaps that is. But as you look

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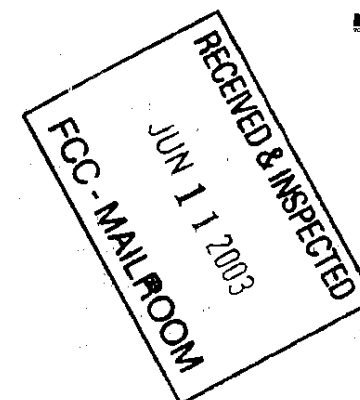
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The Honorable Kathleen Q. Abernathy
Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

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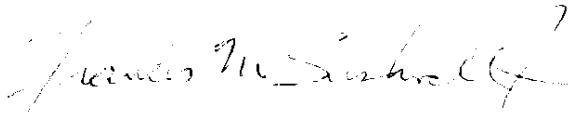
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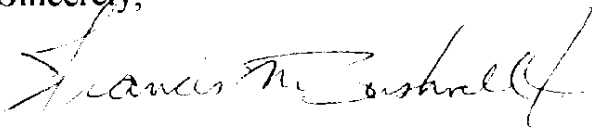
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